

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

## FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

October 2003



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
Office of Economic Advisors

### Seasonal trends: unemployment falls as students and seasonal workers leave labor force

**Editor's note:** The December issue of the *Workforce Observations* will be the last one mailed in hard copy. If you wish to receive email notifications when each issue is published on the Internet, please call the editor at (608) 242-4885, email him at [dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us), or subscribe directly at [http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/wda/wo\\_pubs.htm#to](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/wda/wo_pubs.htm#to). Readers can generally view, print or download this newsletter several days before the hard copy arrives.

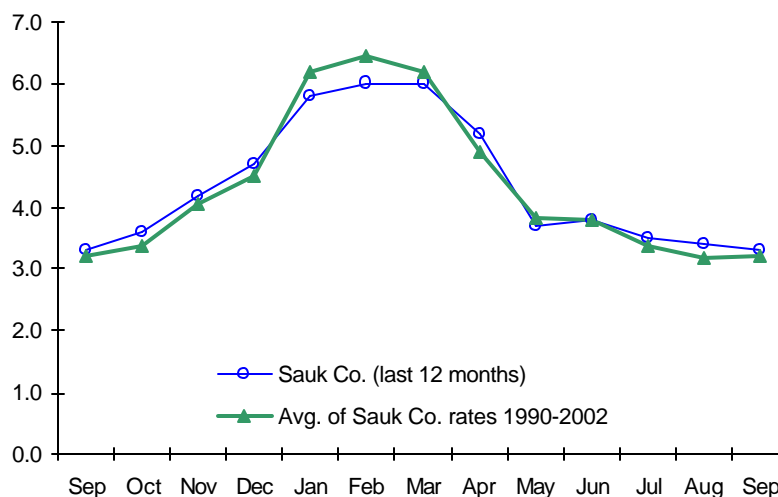
In September, **Columbia County** was 0.9 percent above its typical September unemployment rate. This is in line with the South Central region. The rate was not as far above typical levels in September as it was in July or August, but still further above typical levels than any point from last September through this June. Seasonal factors such as weather and students returning to schools dominated August-to-September changes in leisure & hospitality, construction and government. While most sectors posted

more jobs this September than last, manufacturing is further below last year's levels than it has been at any point this year.

**Dane County's** unemployment rate held steady in July and August, when it would normally fall, so it is not surprising that it fell more sharply than usual in September. Both retail

trade and leisure & hospitality expect to shed jobs in September. The former is above last year's levels while the latter is below. Despite little change in September, financial activities retains jobs gained over the summer, rather than shrinking sharply as it did last September. Instead of shedding jobs as it would in a typical September, manufacturing added jobs. This, along with lackluster leisure & hospitality, bucks state trends.

Unemployment rates - not seasonally adjusted



The unemployment rate in **Dodge County** has swung more sharply than usual since June, and September was no exception. Despite its precipitous decline, the unemployment rate remains further above typical levels than it has

### Labor force estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	3,087,200	-44,710	79,000	459,400	-7,070	19,300	29,700	-240	1,390	293,400	-2,670	14,700
Employed	2,936,400	-25,310	66,600	444,400	-4,650	17,600	28,300	20	1,220	285,800	-1,880	13,700
Unemployed	150,800	-19,400	12,400	15,000	-2,420	1,710	1,410	-270	170	7,700	-800	960
Unemployment rate (%)	4.9	-0.5	0.3	3.3	-0.4	0.3	4.7	-0.9	0.3	2.6	-0.3	0.2

	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	47,300	-1,460	670	42,600	-820	860	7,800	0	350	38,600	-1,860	1,380
Employed	44,900	-430	350	40,800	-630	680	7,300	10	320	37,300	-1,740	1,330
Unemployed	2,400	-1,030	320	1,770	-190	180	460	-10	40	1,280	-120	50
Unemployment rate (%)	5.1	-1.9	0.7	4.2	-0.3	0.4	5.9	-0.2	0.2	3.3	-0.1	0.0

\*\* Includes labor force participants residing in area. Estimates are **NOT** seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary and subject to revision. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Results are rounded. For more information call (608) 242-4885 or email [dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us).

been for nine of the last twelve months and further above typical levels than in any of the other South Central counties. Construction declines were in line with typical seasonal patterns. Manufacturing, despite a drop in September, was not as far below last year's levels as it has been for much of this year. In information, professional, business & other services, the summer employment boost was smaller than last year and the autumn slowing looks milder so far.

After smaller-than-usual unemployment rate declines in July and August, **Jefferson County** saw a larger-than-usual decline in September, bringing the closer to typical levels than it has been since May. Manufacturing remains nearly a thousand jobs under last September's total, and roughly half of that gap is probably attributable to things other than the food processing strike. The retail & wholesale trade sector lost more jobs than it usually does in September, but was one of just three sectors showing substantially more jobs this September than last. The other two sectors were construction, (which is following typical seasonal patterns very closely, with modest but respectable September-to-September growth) and leisure & hospitality (which dominates the September-to-September job growth picture). Information, professional, business & other services grew more steadily from February to August this year than last year, and shrank more sharply this September than last.

At 5.9 percent, **Marquette County** saw a higher September unemployment rate than any September rate from 1990 through 2002. Nonetheless, it was closer to the typical rate than it was in July or August and more in line with trends of

the last 12 months. Leisure & hospitality and retail & wholesale trade lost jobs, as they typically do in September. While both sectors remain above last September's levels, they grew more slowly this summer than they did last summer. The education & health services sector is as far below last year's figures as it has been at any time this year (when comparing each month to the same month last year). Information, professional, business & other services has been flatter this year than last and has not yet shown convincing signs of recovering from job losses last September and November.

**Sauk County** is much closer to typical unemployment levels than other South Central counties. Part of the reason for this is that the definition of typical (average of each month's rates from 1990-2002) includes years in the early 1990s, before the structure and cycle of the county's economy changed. Nonetheless, a 3.3 percent unemployment rate is well below national, statewide and regional norms. Comparing August to September, the decline in leisure & hospitality employment stands out. Comparing this September to last September, leisure & hospitality is the only sector posting positive gain. Information, professional, business & other services shed fewer jobs this September than last, but that may be largely attributable to milder growth in the spring and summer of this year than the same periods last year. Financial activities lost jobs in March and in April (both last year and this year) which do not appear to have been fully recovered.

Readers with questions or comments regarding this newsletter can call (608) 242-4885 or email [dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us).

### Employment by industry estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	2,788,100	-10,400	-5,500	438,000	-2,800	6,600	22,300	50	550	304,200	-900	6,600
Const., min'g & nat. resources	127,700	-3,400	-7,800	23,300	-200	450	1,210	-50	60	15,900	0	300
Manufacturing	514,100	-6,900	-16,900	62,700	-170	-130	4,900	-60	-170	30,100	100	1,600
Trade (wholesale & retail)	436,400	-5,600	6,600	63,200	-890	1,230	3,400	-20	40	43,000	-500	1,400
Transport, Whrsing, Utilities	105,700	1,500	-800	11,600	80	330	830	30	40	7,700	-100	1,900
Financial activities	158,700	-500	5,100	29,600	-50	1,860	590	-10	40	26,000	0	1,900
Education & health services	366,500	2,900	8,200	43,700	-300	1,080	2,600	10	70	28,900	-200	900
Leisure & hospitality	248,400	-13,400	1,900	43,200	-2,800	1,940	2,700	-240	310	24,100	-500	-300
Info, prof, bus. & other svcs	434,600	-3,600	5,700	68,300	-890	500	2,100	-110	0	55,700	-600	1,100
Government	396,000	18,600	-7,500	92,300	2,400	-680	3,900	500	150	72,800	800	-600
	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Sep 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	33,800	-140	-420	35,300	-400	-710	4,100	130	50	38,200	-1,590	510
Const., min'g & nat. resources	2,400	-50	20	1,360	-50	70	270	0	10	2,200	-40	-10
Manufacturing	10,700	-10	-540	9,100	-120	-990	1,300	0	50	6,600	-90	-70
Trade (wholesale & retail)	3,900	-30	-50	6,100	-330	130	490	-20	10	6,300	10	-310
Transport, Whrsing, Utilities	1,010	20	20	1,180	20	-20	60	0	0	840	10	-10
Financial activities	710	-10	-40	960	0	20	120	0	0	1,270	-30	-60
Education & health services	4,200	-50	200	4,500	-30	-70	290	0	-20	3,200	-30	0
Leisure & hospitality	2,900	-120	240	3,500	-40	280	510	-20	10	9,500	-1,890	1,400
Info, prof, bus. & other svcs	2,900	-20	-180	4,600	-100	-60	230	0	-30	2,900	-60	-340
Government	5,200	130	-90	4,000	240	-60	850	180	0	5,400	530	-80

\*Includes jobs with employers in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary and subject to revision.

Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding.

Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Results are rounded. For more information call (608) 242-4885 or email [dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us).